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ABSTRACT

Educational development in Mauritius is directed by a Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs in conjunction with a government appointed advisory board. Education is the largest single item in the national budget and comprises 25% of estimated annual expenditure for 1977-8. The primary education system serves 92% of the primary school age population. The teacher pupil ratio is 1:27 and promotion from grade to grade is automatic with a comprehensive exam administered at the end of the sixth year. Elementary science and civics have been introduced into the curriculum on an experimental basis. Secondary education offers a broad base core curriculum of academic subjects for the first two years, followed by a scientific, technical, or commercial specialization. The University of Mauritius offers courses in agriculture, administration, and technology. Conscious of the need for continued improvement of the educational system, the government set up a Five Year Plan for 1975-80. Objectives of the Five Year Plan are: (1) democratization of the educational system; (2) balance of facilities between urban and rural areas; (3) curriculum diversification; (4) institution of lifelong learning programs; and (5) adjustment of the educational system to meet manpower requirements. (Author/DB)

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MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS
MAURITIUS

REPORT ON EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS 1974 - 1976. Mauritius.
PRESENTED AT THE 36TH SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON EDUCATION - GENEVA - SEPTEMBER 1977

Basic facts about Mauritius

	Mauritius and	Rodrigues
Location	20° South of Equator 57° East of Greenwich	19° South 64° East
Area	720 square miles	40 square miles
Population 1975	856,516	26,343
Currency	Mauritian rupee	1 SO.R = Rs 7.71 (April 1976)
Public Finance	Recurrent Expenditure 1974/75	734.3 m
	Recurrent Revenue 1974/75	744.9
Education	Recurrent Expenditure 1975/76	107.5 m
	Recurrent Expenditure 1976/77	133.6
Government	Sovereign Independent State, Member of Commonwealth	
Port Louis		
Mauritius	Independent 12th March 1968	

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I ADMINISTRATION

1 Administrative provisions - the Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs is responsible for the development of Education in Mauritius, The Education Ordinance no 2 of 1960 provides "Inter alia" that the Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs shall ensure:

a. Effective direction, development and co-ordination of all the educational activities in the country;
b. the recruitment and training of teachers;
c. the progressive development of all classes of the community of practical education suited to the age, ability and aptitude of the pupil.

2 The Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs is assisted by a Senior Staff composed of 2 Permanent Secretaries, 1 Principal Assistant Secretary, 3 Administrative Officers, 3 Chief Education Officers, 8 Principal Education Officers, 14 Education Officers, 5 Senior Inspector of Schools, 19 Inspector of Schools, 1 Principal Establishment Officer, 1 Principal Finance Officer and 1 Senior Stores Officer. A Parliamentary Secretary also helps the Minister.

3 A parastatal body, the Private Secondary School Authority, was set up in June, 1976 to look into all aspects of secondary education in private colleges. Its activities are:

i. to promote and encourage education in private secondary schools;
ii. to set up and operate the project of financial aid to all private secondary schools;
iii. control the manner in which aid is made use of;
iv. pay tuition fees to Managers of secondary schools;
v. ensure employment terms are fair and reasonable;
vi. prepare a pension scheme for staff of private secondary school

4 The Education Ordinance provides for the appointment by the Minister of an Advisory Board to advise him on all matters pertaining to Education and Cultural Affairs in the country.

II PRIMARY EDUCATION

1 In 1975, there were 183 government and 55 aided primary schools in Mauritius only and 7 government and aided primary schools in Rodrigues. There are also a certain number of unaided private schools. They are all controlled by the Ministry of Education.

2 In 1975, the enrolment in primary schools (Mauritius only) was 145,424. This accounted for about 92% of the school age primary population. Promotion from grade to grade is automatic and the drop-out rate is low. The teacher pupil ratio is 1:27.

3 Primary education is generally oriented towards examinations administered at the end of Standard VI. However, the prime consideration is to improve the quality and content of the education provided in the primary schools. The teaching of elementary science and civics at primary level has been introduced on an experimental basis.

III SECONDARY EDUCATION

1 Secondary education is being diversified. The John Kennedy College which opened in 1965 offers a broad based common core of academic subjects in the first two years of secondary schooling and a choice of scientific, technical or commercial subjects at about 13±. Junior Technical schools will make the system less academically oriented.

2 The State Secondary Schools:-

The Royal College (Curepipe), the Royal College (Port Louis), the John Kennedy College for boys, the Queen Elizabeth College for Girls - provide a seven-year course for the Cambridge Higher School Certificate. The Mahatma Gandhi Institute, the Rose-Belle Government Secondary School for boys, Pamplemousses Government Secondary School and Dr Maurice Curé Government Secondary School for girls are five new State Secondary Schools which are now operational.

3 In 1975, 94 secondary schools were grant aided compared with 13 in 1974 and the total amount of subsidy to these schools was increased fourfold as a result. They all provide courses for the School Certificate and Higher School Certificate classes.

4 The expansion of secondary education and the increase of aid to secondary schools can be assessed from the following table:

	NUMBER OF PUPILS ON ROLL		
Type of school	1973	1974	1975
Government ...	2,965	3,157	3,296
Aided	7,819	8,079	10,240
Non-Aided ...	44,835	48,880	3,968
	55,619	60,116	64,953

5 Secondary education is being re-assessed in the light of the Five-Year Plan 1975-1980 and it is along with primary education, being closely scrutinised by a Curriculum and Research Committee. The teaching of oriental languages in the government secondary schools has started in 1974.

6 The introduction offree secondary education at the beginning of 1977 has alleviated the direct financial burden of secondary education on the family budget. This measure will have a considerable impact on the socio-economic structure of the country over the next twenty years.

V POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING

1 The University of Mauritius is the main post secondary and training institution in Mauritius covering for about 450 full-time and 480 part-time students in the fields of Agriculture, Administration and Technology. It also provides for special training programmes - part-time, sandwitch and seminars. Free University education in Mauritius was introduced at the same time as free secondary education at the beginning of this year.

2 Technician training is provided in Junior Technical Schools and the Industrial Trade Training Centre. Six centralised workshops and laboratories and another Industrial Trade Training Centre are under construction. Five Rural Education Centres are planned. A training unit for para-professional manpower has been set up and offers vocational training for secondary school leavers in technical and commercial subjects. Apart from the on-the-job training there is the Nursing Training School, a Sea Training School, has started operating. A Hotel and Catering School started its activities in May 1973. Three co-operative Agricultural Youth Training which were set up, are making great strides.

3 Training in crafts and cottage industries is provided at five centres.

4 For further education abroad, the government grants fourteen scholarships and in 1974 130, in 1975 88 and in 1976 92 scholarships, fellowships, bursaries were granted by various international organisations and it is estimated than 500 students pursue post-secondary education at their own cost. It is estimated that about 1893 students were receiving some form of post-secondary education abroad during the year 1976. Careers guidance has been incorporated in schools in liaison with the Youth Career Guidance Services.

VI AUDIO-VISUAL ASPECTS

1 School radio broadcast for primary schools is being expanded, and has already about ten years of history. Educational television was inaugurated in 1969 by the Prime Minister and is being steadily expanded. It caters especially for secondary schools and it has now become an established feature.

2 The Mauritius College of the Air was established in August 1972. In 1974, the college was running experimental courses for various audiences. So far it has looked more into pre-vocational training courses and life improvement courses. The Mauritius College of the Air is involved on three way teaching:-
correspondence, radio/cassette, television and face to face.

VII NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR UNESCO AND FIVE YEAR PLAN

1 The Government concurred in the establishment of the National Commission at the end of 1970 and the Secretariat started working in February 1971. The Commission was formally inaugurated on 15th July 1971. It is now fully operational and discharges its duties as an executive and liaison agency.

2 Conscious of the need for continued improvement of the system of education, a Five Year Plan 1975-1980 has been concerned with the following objectives:-

a. to democratise the education system;
b. to spread out schools and colleges evenly over the country so as to balance the educational facilities between the urban and

d. to make an integrated approach to the concept of education as a life long process for the development of a well-balanced personality;

e. to adjust the education system to meet the manpower requirements.

PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION

Pre-primary education is being developed and improved in conjunction with non-governmental organisations, local authorities, the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund and the Ministry of Social Security. About 300 teachers are being trained and re-trained.

ANCILLARY BENEFITS

Ancillary benefit,include a book loan scheme to primary and secondary school children, a school feeding project for primary school children.

EDUCATION

Education is now the largest singly item on the national budget making up for 25% of estimated expenditure for 1977-78 compared with 11.4% of the 1976-77 budget.

STATISTICAL DATA

APPENDIX I

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS BY EDUCATION LEVEL

PRIMARY EDUCATION	1973	1974	1975
Government Schools	178	183	184
Aided Schools	50	50	50
Unaided Schools	-	-	-
	228	233	234

SECONDARY EDUCATION	1973	1974	1975
Government Schools	4	5	6
Aided Schools	13	13	95
Unaided Schools	107	106	24
	124	124	125

POST-PRIMARY EDUCATION	1971	1972	1973
Government Schools	4	4	4
Government Teachers' Training College	1	1	1

APPENDIX II

UNIVERSITY OF MAURITIUS

Enrolment by School from 1973 to 1975

	1973-74	1974-75
Agriculture	126	157
Administration	808	730
Industrial Technology ...	386	434
	1,320	1,321

APPENDIX III

YEAR	RECURRENT EXPENDITURE	CAPITAL EXPENDITURE
1974/75	86.13 m	10,482,025
1975/76	124,96 m	18,160,215
1976/77	NOT YET READY	

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